

Remarks

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 112

Claims 8 and 12-13 have been amended to read “each rule”.

Claim 15 has been cancelled.

Drawings

A new Figure has been inserted to show the features of Claims 18, 19 and 24. The paragraphs between pages 5 and 6 and on page 7 have been altered to refer to the new Figure accordingly. Approval is requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102

Applicants submit that Thro does not disclose the feature of “specifying a manner of communications” as claimed in Claim 1. Rather, Thro only discloses that the terminal to which the communication is directed can be specified.

In fact, Thro states at lines 57 to 67 of Column 5 that “notice of messages, and or messages having a user defined priority of level 1 are to be routed to the recipient’s answering service. Notice of messages, and/or messages, having a user defined priority of level 2 are to be routed to the recipient’s e-mail account. Notice of messages, and/or messages, having a user defined priority of level 2 are to be routed to the recipient’s facsimile machine. Notice of messages, and/or messages, having a user defined priority of level 3 are to be routed to the recipient’s pager and notice of messages, and/or messages, having a user defined priority of level 5 are to be routed to the recipient’s cellular telephone”.

Nowhere does Thro state or imply that there is a rule “specifying a manner of communications between the corresponding recipient party and an initiating party” as claimed in Claim 1. Applicants submit that on reading Thro one skilled in the art would only learn to specify a terminal to which the communications, or notice of communications, should

be routed. One skilled in the art would not learn to specify how the person should be contacted by a party.

Additionally, Thro does not disclose causing "a communications application, appropriate to the manner of communications specified within the rule, to open at an initiating party device". For example, in the present invention, at one point in time the recipient may prefer to be contacted by email (from paragraph 1 page 8). In this case the rule is processed by the initiating party's device and results in the appropriate application on the initiating party's device being opened.

In Thro, the recipient's message, or a notice of a message, would be directed to the email account. However, Thro would not cause an email application to be opened at the initiating party's device.

Hence, Applicants submit that Claim 1 is not anticipated by Thro.

Claims 16 and 30 also recite "specifying the manner of communications between an initiating party and the recipient party". Hence, for the same reasons as Claim 1, the Applicants submit that Thro does not anticipate Claims 16 and 30.

Thro describes a mechanism by which messages, or notices of messages, are sent to a recipient in any format are sent to different locations or devices and are ordered according to priorities specified by the party sending a message and the party receiving a message. All that is disclosed is that the "originating party transmits a message to the server" (Column 4 lines 43). The originating party is not disclosed as having any access to details held within the database.

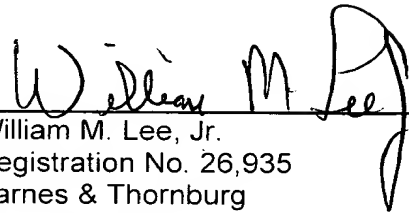
What is presently claimed in Claim 31 is a database comprising "at least one rule included in each entry, specifying which details for the entry may be disclosed to an initiating party". Applicants submit that as Thro does not teach, or even imply, the disclosure of a recipient party's details to the initiating party Claim 31 is not anticipated by Thro.

Claims 2 to 14 and 17 to 29 are submitted to be patentable at least by virtue of their dependencies.

Given the above, further and favorable reconsideration is urged.

June 11, 2004

Respectfully submitted,



William M. Lee, Jr.
Registration No. 26,935
Barnes & Thornburg
P.O. Box 2786
Chicago, Illinois 60690-2786
(312) 214-4800
(312) 759-5646 (fax)